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WHAT WE WANT

WHAT WE WANT

WHAT WE WANT

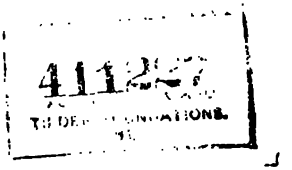
AN OPEN LETTER TO PIUS X. FROM A GROUP OF PRIESTS

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN, TOGETHER WITH THE PAPAL DISCOURSE WHICH CALLED FORTH THE LETTER

By A. LESLIE LILLEY

VICAR OF ST. MARY'S, PADDINGTON GREEN

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET
1907



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PREFACE

THE Letter which is here translated is but one expression of a movement which aims at vindicating the claims of the Roman Church to be the authoritative teacher of faith and morals to the Western world. The conviction which inspires this movement is that Rome, if she will but be true to her mission, inherits the duty and the power of proclaiming to the modern world all the truth which it needs to subdue the riotous energy of its life into obedience to the Divine purposes. The leaders of the movement believe that Rome has been the permanent witness to that Catholic temper in religion which

was never so necessary in the interests of real religious influence and growth as at the present day; that even under all the aberrations of her momentary policy she has cherished it as the pearl of great price. And their sole desire is to remind her of the conditions under which alone she can continue to uphold that witness among Western peoples.

They are not rebels against authority. They would but remind authority of its nature, its origin, its purpose. They would remind those who are for the moment the guardians of authority in their Church that it consists, not in the imposition of arbitrary fiats, but in the recovery and crystallization of the faith which is vaguely diffused throughout and revealed in the common life. They would remind them that authority proceeds from the Holy Spirit—*i.e.*, from all those

movements of thought and action towards a higher human ideal which are the authentic effects of the operation of the Divine Spirit. They would remind them that authority exists to constitute a brotherhood of all men of goodwill, and not merely to procure formal order or enforce unquestioning submission in an exclusive society.

It is with this conception of authority that they approach the present head of their Church in order to justify their action and their methods. If they are attempting to apply a new and unfamiliar mode of apologetic, it is not in any light or frivolous spirit of innovation, but for high and serious reasons. It is, on the one hand, because the new learning has provided them with an instrument for more vividly presenting the traditional faith, and they dare not refuse

religious experience, not a tradition of the mere abstract logic of theological deduction. It is through the life of the risen Christ really lived in the Church that she, as the kernel of moral and religious humanity, becomes the witness to truth and the dispenser of it. She has no merely magical and miraculous power of conserving the truth so that it may magically and miraculously minister life. Her infallibility is not a magical and absolute gift, but a vital and therefore relative acquisition. And so it is that her methods of apologetic must vary if her claim to be the religious teacher of mankind is not to prove itself a vulgar deception haunted by the retribution of speedy exposure.

It is with this view of the nature of the religious tradition of Christendom that the authors of this Letter face the prob-

movements of thought and action, and that it was her duty to elicit and order this revelation according to the Divine norm which she held in trust. In her practical use of that norm there has been at least a general consistency. In her theory of its explicit nature and character there has been much variation. The theory has varied not only from age to age, but among theologians of the same age. The norm has been represented now as a fixed deposit of miraculously revealed truth, and, again, as a miraculously guided explicitation of that deposit; now as a rigid tradition to which growth was unnecessary, for which it was indeed impossible, and, again, as a tradition which had to grow in order to live. For the modern apologist this norm is also a tradition, and a growing tradition. But it is the tradition of the concrete logic of actual

adopted, that process which they have here described. No apologetic which fails to take account of both can be really fruitful in our day. An apologetic is not needed for those who believe already. It is by its very nature intended for those who do not believe. The traditional apologetic is a superfluous demonstration of the positions involved in the antecedent belief. The true apologetic is the demonstration that the belief is the necessary outcome of positions which seem to be quite independent of it—positions which are given immediately in the profoundest experience of life and sincere reflection upon it.

It is the same apologetic preoccupation which determines the attitude of the authors towards metaphysics. They do not deny the need of a metaphysic, the craving of the human mind to conceive

somehow of the ultimate reality. What they do deny is the sufficiency of any metaphysical explanation of the universe. For such explanations proceed on the assumption that it is the province of the intellect to establish an absolute conception of reality which will be valid before all experience, and even apart from all experience. Experience must either be juggled with till it fits into this preliminary conception, or be finally left outside it as inherently irrational. But the modern habit of mind cannot be satisfied with either an arbitrary dogmatism or a despairing scepticism. It admits, indeed, that there *is* something prior to all experience, or, rather, that there is a governing element involved in all experience. But this element is not knowledge, but faith, the life-attitude which instinctively trusts human experience as deter-

mined by ultimate reality, and as making for a fuller expression and a clearer vision of that reality. The intellect works upon the data of this experience, under the guidance of the faith involved in it, to project a metaphysic which must be satisfied with being provisional and perfectible. The ultimate metaphysic can exist only in the infinite mind surveying infinite experience. And in religion especially the influence of an abstract metaphysic ought to be distrusted. There, especially, a metaphysic must be in constant and vital touch with experience. What we know of God and the whole world of ultimate reality is but certain effects wrought in the soul of man. It is only by observing those effects and the laws of their production that we can hope to clarify our meagre intellectual concepts of God and the world of ultimate reality.

Religion is the original and independent form of experience through which alone a satisfying metaphysic can be gradually established. But the prejudice of theologians has been to regard religion as dependent for its existence and preservation upon the guarantee of a previously revealed metaphysic. The authors of this Letter have very shrewdly pointed out that in practice religious teaching has always dispensed with its supposed metaphysical basis, and grounded itself in experience. Even the doctrines of the Trinity and of the Eucharist, the most metaphysical in their precise definition of all the doctrines of the Church, cannot be taught to simple souls save in terms of that actual religious experience out of which the doctrinal definitions originally grew.

Yet it may naturally be felt by some

that the authors of the Letter have, in their anxiety to place themselves at the modern point of view, especially in philosophical questions, conceded to it more than was absolutely necessary—more, even, than it itself demands. "It is our mind," they say in the name of modern critical philosophy, "which by its operation creates the things whose aspects only at a given moment we know" ("È il nostro spirito che agisce e crea le cose delle quali noi conosciamo solo gli aspetti in un dato momento"). There may seem, here and in the passage which follows, to be a denial of anything immediate and objective in our knowledge of reality. Such a representation of the results of critical philosophy can hardly be justified. That the mind in its operations is from the very beginning in immediate and vital touch with a permanent and

objective reality, that its subjective representations are consistently determined by the character of that objective world as once and for all given, that the categories of the understanding are in their last analysis the forms of a necessary relation between our own minds and the world of fact, and therefore possess something of an objective character—these are positions which critical philosophy not only does not deny, but increasingly tends to affirm. Yet with this reservation—and it is a reservation which probably the authors of this Letter would themselves make—it remains true that our knowledge is "subjective, relative, and susceptible of transformation and variation according to the evolution of the human mind."

Liberals outside the Roman Communion are still a little bewildered by

the boldness and courage of this movement within the Roman pale. They are still haunted by the invincible prejudice that no good thing can come out of Rome. They believe that a crusade on behalf of truth and freedom, undertaken under the conditions which communion with Rome imposes, is chimerical and foredoomed to failure. But, after all, no project is chimerical for which men are willing to fight and to suffer, and no project is worth much which does not impose upon its champions this double necessity. The men who are resisting absolutism in the Roman Church know well that it is a mountain they are attempting to remove. But they have not set their hands to the task without counting the cost and remembering the conditions of its successful accomplishment. If they are fighting absolutism, they are fighting it in the

unhesitating faith that it is the last and worst of heresies. We who are outside the Roman Communion are too ready to believe that absolutism is the indispensable dogma, the normal and necessary form, of Roman religion. We may, indeed, be pardoned for holding that belief, for a triumphant Ultramontanism has for a whole century been dinning it into our ears. It is, as a Liberal Catholic has recently affirmed,* the very triumph of Ultramontanism to have created that belief. But these men are fighting this particular form of heresy, and they will continue to fight until their Church has been delivered from the grip of the monster which is now strangling its spiritual life.

Nor, apart from the present decisive influence of the absolutist idea and the

* See *The Nation* of June 15, 1907, p. 597.

absolutist party within the Roman Church, is it unnatural that the attempt to revive in Christianity the temper of Catholic intelligence and sympathy should be made within that Church, just as it is being made elsewhere. Rome is still the vital nucleus of that society which exists as an instrument for the making of the kingdom of God. She alone reaches out into all lands, speaks through all languages, reconciles all differences of human condition and circumstance in the unity of one great human hope. Her dissolution would be the dissolution of organized Christianity over a large part of the Western world. Even Protestants ought to recognize that Protestantism is but her provincial ally, witnessing for a season in certain outposts of her dominions to the claims of truth and freedom which she, in her perverted conception

of the method of unity, has for a moment forgotten or denied. Whatever she may think, Protestantism has something to teach her which it has learned through four centuries of stern and relentless struggle against her arrogant and overbearing mood. The truth is that the merely controversial struggle between Catholicism and Protestantism is a thing of the past. The real present struggle between them is a struggle for mutual assimilation. Each needs the other, each has begun to feel that need, and, as is perhaps natural, each is unwilling to admit it too frankly. But it is to the honour of the Liberal Catholics that they believe enough in their own Church to face courageously and sincerely the character and the measure of her needs, and to seek to supply them whencesoever it may be possible.

Yet it is not from Protestantism in its narrow and ecclesiastical sense that the Roman Church can derive that which she most needs, just as it is not in an ultramontane Romanism that Protestantism can find that Catholic spirit and temper after which it longs. The world of religious reality, the world of moral aspiration and endeavour, has widened out beyond the range of these two conflicting forces. They both alike have to reconquer a world which is steadily slipping away from their grasp. And to reconquer that world they must understand it and help it to understand them. The Church cannot effectively accomplish her work of apostolate in a world which she has cut off from her sympathy and intelligence. The weapons of excommunication and anathema may avail in a society which believes in their power,

which acknowledges the authority of him who wields them; but it is as ludicrously futile to utter an anathema against an unbelieving world as it is to try to frighten a man of mature years by calling "Bogie!" The authors of this Letter are but attempting to remind their Church of the conditions under which alone she can hope to accomplish successfully her mission to this generation. And even if some may think that they have occasionally conceded more than the actual conditions of thought and knowledge require, yet all generous minds will gratefully recognize the high nobility of their aim and the general wisdom and insight of their actual attempt.

A. L. LILLEY.

July, 1907.

*** I have appended to my translation an occasional footnote in explanation of allusions which might be obscure to the English reader.

WHAT WE WANT

AN OPEN LETTER TO PIUS X. FROM A GROUP OF PRIESTS

MOST HOLY FATHER,

Our conduct would seem to lend foundation to the charge which in the presence of the new Cardinals and of many Bishops you launched against a notable portion of your flock, if we, who feel ourselves assailed by it—our hearts full of submission and respect to the voice of the judge, but full of trust also in the clemency of the Father—had not the strength to proclaim our innocence.

We were well aware that the enthusiasm with which we welcomed your invitation, "Restaurare omnia in

Christo,"* and the energy with which we set ourselves to bring the vivifying spark of Christianity into every manifestation of modern life, could not fail to disturb the golden dreams of those whose life ran in quiet and untroubled channels, and to seem turbulent and disrespectful to that little world of the Cinquecento, which at the beginning of your Pontificate you found so repugnant to your evangelical spirit. It was not long, indeed, before every means of introducing confusion and dismay within our ranks was sought in the hope that, being forced to reveal ourselves as impertinent critics rather than as the vigilant friends which we are, we might have been compelled to desist from further disturbance. Individual opponents, reviews, and books, abusing your confidence, hastened to

* In his first Encylical, dated October 4, 1903, Pius X. called upon all the Archbishops and Bishops in communion with the Holy See to co-operate with him in "renewing all things in Christ."—TR.

paint us and our deeds and intentions in the darkest colours. Every attempt was made to turn us into rebels. The alarm of the danger of apostasy and schism was sounded. Many in their malignant mood went so far as to complain of us because we did not hasten to justify their sinister predictions by an ill-regulated life. And you, who, at the first, were uncertain which course to take, encouraging us to-day to disown us to-morrow, ended by throwing yourself into the arms of those to whom you would once have refused the slightest esteem. Already the Encyclical of last August bore the traces of the impulsive pen which in a certain review had pronounced our condemnation, when, a month ago, after having struck at us by inflicting a severe penalty on one who had laboured so hard and suffered so much for the Church,* you invited all your Pastors to

* Don Romolo Murri, leader of the Italian Christian Democrats (*vide* p. 63).

co-operate with you in rooting us out as "sowers of tares, as apostles of monstrous heresies, and as rebels who dreamed of the renewal of dogma by a return to the pure Gospel, rejecting the authority of the Church and of theology."

The enormity of the charge, the violence of the tone and the gesture with which you uttered it and which produced such a profound impression upon the bystanders; the gravity of that moment in which innumerable eyes were turned with anxious scrutiny upon us, as if to divine our attitude; and, above all, the impulse of our own consciences, which nowise reprove us for having failed in our duty as fervent and devout Catholics, constrain us to raise our voice in a solemn profession of faith. We repeat that it is by no means a mere protest that we wish to utter. If it is permissible for the accused to defend himself before the judge, it is a duty for the devoted son to open the secrets of his heart with frank-

ness and sincerity to his own father; and the father ought to rejoice at it. Our state of mind at this moment is the same as that which spurred St. Catherine of Siena to display her indignation against Urban VI. (when with a passionate unfeelingness he sought to blunt her eagerness in her schemes of reform) by hurling at him these words, so living in their present application: "Justice without mercy would be injustice rather than justice. Do what you do in measure, and not without measure (for to act without measure destroys rather than mends), and with benevolence and peaceful heart. For the love of Christ Crucified, moderate a little those sudden movements to which Nature urges you."

For us, profoundly Christian souls, religion, far from being a vague, mystical feeling which soothes the spirit and isolates it in a barren egoism, is a Divine reality, which kindles into life and exalts the souls of men, and, knitting them

together in a bond of brotherhood, directs their life towards a supreme and common goal. For us Christianity is the highest expression of religion thus conceived, and of Christianity in its turn we consider Roman Catholicism to be the amplest realization. With the affirmation of Christianity as life, we affirm also that it cannot be a mere intellectual abstraction, and, therefore, "the pure Gospel" of which you speak, "stripped of the explanations of theology," is not for us a reality, since, if it wishes to be reality and life, it must become externalized in forms derived from similar expressions of ordinary human activity. As Christians, we accept the authority of the Church, as the careful dispenser of the deposit of eternal truth inherited from Christ, to regulate and govern our religious life, and to interpret and supply its living needs and claims. We accept, further, the dogmas and rites by which all souls, in the communion of faith,

hope, and charity, may participate in the life of the living Christ.

"God in Christ, and Christ in the Church"—that is the profound conviction by which all our actions are inspired. That we should be accused of being insubordinate to the authority of the Church and theology, and of turning to the "pure Gospel," proves that you do not know our works. It shows us also that Loisy, Laberthonnière, Tyrrell, and others, who had built up anew the most solid apology for Christianity against Protestant rationalists, have been disowned, and their works condemned, not on account of errors, but by reason of the prejudice with which they have been judged. And it shows us even more clearly that authority, incapable of entering into the spirit and understanding the writings of its faithful and deserving servants, does not confute, does not discuss, but condemns, and condemns because it does not understand.

Because it does not understand—that is the painful truth which explains why so many among those who have consecrated their youth and their most precious energies to the Church's triumph are so lightly sacrificed as victims.

Holy Father, when you were raised to the throne you appealed to all men of goodwill to rally round you and co-operate with you in the Christian restoration of society. Society, indeed, stood in much need of such a service, seeing that it has for so many years been alienated from the Church, which it looks upon as an ancient and intractable foe. Not only are the ancient cathedrals, which the piety of free and faithful peoples in the Middle Ages raised to the Blessed Virgin and to sainted patrons, deserted; not only do men no longer care to resort to religion for strength and light for their souls, when harassed by everyday fatigues and struggles; not only have respect and

veneration for the sacred things which men learned to love from their cradle disappeared; but the Church is regarded as an obstacle to the freedom and happiness of peoples, the priest is insulted in the street as a vulgar and obscurantist parasite, the Gospel and Christianity are regarded as expressions of a civilization which has become obsolete, because of its incompetence to answer to the high ideals of liberty, justice, and knowledge, which are agitating and inspiring the masses. This state of mind is ever gaining ground, and has spread from the University chair to the workshop, from the populous city quarter to the open fields. And everything has conspired to contribute effectively to its diffusion, from the periodical to the daily newspaper, from the novel to the privately printed pamphlet, from the strong and resonant accents of the platform to the low and vulgar songs of the people. But few have remained faithful to religious traditions, and even

this minority is showing signs of decadence and dissolution. For it religion is no longer the directing force of life, but a cold observance of traditional formulas and precepts. The men are reduced to a handful, the women go on slowly diminishing, and the young people are becoming ever more refractory to religious training.

Some have already announced the death of Catholicism, others have bemoaned its miserable condition. We do neither. It is not every crisis that brings death. At times an organism, when once the crisis is past and it has been purified of those elements which are alien and hostile to its nature, emerges to a more vigorous life. And we, who still feel all the riches and the inexhaustible power of Christianity in virtue of an intimate experience which overcomes every human argument to the contrary, have, in answer to your paternal call, girt ourselves with confidence to the task of imparting to the

minds of others, and helping them to feel, this ineffable experience.

But to-day men exhibit a spirit of distrust and suspicion with regard to us. They are inclined beforehand to reject our invitation. This it is which makes the crisis more acute. Our work would be in vain if we did not retrace the causes of the crisis with objectivity and clearness of vision, just as the work of the physician is vain if he does not seek, before prescribing the remedy, to gain an accurate knowledge of the disease. A frank and loyal sincerity must be the guide of all our research; for all our work which was not guided by the desire of objective truth would be contrary to the Divine Spirit, which is *the* Spirit of truth.

It is useless to conceal the fact that, if the populace is opposed to religion, it is not only because religion imposes duties upon it or forces it to feel the rigour of its moral code; nor is it because the

populace has serious intellectual difficulties in adhering to the dogmas of religion. All these reasons may determine some forms and some moments of popular irreligion, but to be effective they require the working of some earlier and still deeper principle of disturbance in the intimacy of men's consciences. The original cause, perhaps, we shall find in the very attitude of the clergy towards the democratic movements of these later days.

In France the priest was found on the side of the privileged nobility when the people began to murmur ominously at the foot of the tottering throne; and, more than a century later, when the people under a Republican Constitution aimed at consolidating itself on the basis of social reforms, the priest in religious houses and convents was again found conspiring with the remnant of the nobility to make a fresh attack upon its peace. While, in Italy, the priest, after

opposing from century to century the desires which had been formed for its unity and independence, withdrew into a self-centred silence and inaction the moment that the People in its greatness and freedom began to advance along the path of economic reform. So the populace regarded the priest as the enemy of its class, and, as it failed to distinguish between his religious and his political character, ended by treating even religion and Christianity themselves as enemies. The customary demagogue did not fail to turn this confusion to evil account, and very soon religion and its ministers were placed on a level with those oppressors of the people, those systematic opponents of every movement of popular progress—the Conservatives. And so the masses became dechristianized, non-religious, immoral.

But the causes of this crisis were not only political and social. Reasons of another order have concurred to render

it more painful and acute. At the present time, when we have barely escaped from the epoch of scientific systems which elaborated, from ascertained phenomena, universal principles and immutable dogmas to explain the laws of the universe, whether in a spiritualistic or a materialistic sense, we are entering upon a period of real scepticism, differing widely from the dogmatic or negative character of its predecessor.

The progress of the positive and experimental sciences has demonstrated the insufficiency of every metaphysical explanation of the universe. Nor has the accurate establishment of the phenomenon provided any sure datum wherefrom to ascend to its cause, or to learn the nature and essence of the things of which it is a manifestation. The crude phenomenon, we are told, does not exist for us, because we have to verify it through our little internal world of affections, volitions, and previsions. It

is, in short, our mind which, by its operation, creates the things whose aspects only at a given moment we can know and register, whose relations only we can seek to establish by means of categories which are themselves fashioned by our mind for the practical utility of life. Verifications, registrations, and categories make up our science, which is, therefore, not an immediate and objective knowledge of reality, but its representation elaborated by us at a given moment, and so subjective, relative, and capable of transformation and variation in accordance with the evolution of the human spirit, which is in a continual process of becoming. Thence has sprung a great revolution, not only in the circle of the empirical sciences, but in that of the rational sciences as well. The latest attempts to reconstruct the mathematical and geometrical sciences on a basis utterly different from that hitherto employed, attempts which have been

crowned with success, have proved that even these sciences spring at their source from something which is conventional and therefore subjective, and that they arrive, by a chain of hypothetical syllogisms, at conclusions of convenient practical application, answering to our experience, which is always susceptible of control and modification. And so it has come to pass that, along with these sciences, metaphysic also is denied an absolute value in the quest of objective truth; and the edifice of logic, which established general and absolute principles wherefrom certain and assured conclusions were drawn by way of deduction according to given rules, has crumbled to the ground. The demonstrative power of the syllogism once placed in doubt, it was soon banished from the field of the positive sciences; and man, abandoning every attempt at a rational reconstruction of the cosmos, sought to find in himself, in the demands

of his own spirit, in his affections, in all the stir of the energies of his own subconscious *ego*, the practical reason of his own actions, the direction and sure guide of his life. And since the laws which regulate the individual spirit are the same as those which regulate the collective spirit of the masses, and have always and invariably guided humanity throughout the centuries towards its own mysterious destinies, the attempt was made to solve the problem of the worth of human life on the ground of the social sciences, which had taken a historical and psychological direction.

All this confusion has reduced the minds of men to an uncomfortable condition of disturbed equilibrium. What was to become of religion and morals, which had hitherto been presented as a method and form of life imposing themselves from without upon men's consciences by way of deduction from universal principles? When once these

principles are held to be insufficient, and demonstrative value is denied to the syllogism, how are we to prove satisfactorily the existence of God by deducing it, for instance, from the concept of motion and from the principle of causality, which to-day, for the modern habit of mind, have only the relative value of working hypotheses, and may to-morrow be summarily disowned at a stroke? And if this particular demonstration is held to be insufficient, how are we to arrive at the others—as to the necessity of supernatural revelation and positive religion, as to the divine nature of Christianity, truths which, according to the old apologetic, issue from it by a series of deductions? And, further, how are we to induce men to accept as rules of faith and of the religious life the eternal truths of Christianity, seeing that they have reached us in formulas and conceptions which are the genuine expression of a metaphysic no longer acknowledged as

having objective value, but have ceased to correspond with our ordinary language or our ordinary mode of conceiving things? It is true, indeed, that the student has come in our day to find science cold and dumb, incapable of filling in the yawning chasms in knowledge which perplex the mind. It is true that the mind feels itself impelled to seek, beyond the sensible world, something infinitely great and incommensurable, which many are satisfied to call the Unknowable, while many others, seeking it in themselves, and in themselves finding it as an inexpressible Reality which directs their life in a gradual upward movement towards the Good and the True, call it God. But even this new attitude of mind is not very favourable to us. For, even when the need of the existence of a supernatural and Divine world, and of getting into personal communion with it, is felt, all the other questions of the religious

problem must be solved by means of historical and psychological research, the method of which remains hitherto unknown to our apologetic. It is on this account that that apologetic no longer satisfies men's souls, and has lost the power of revealing to them the attraction of the Christian life.

Unhappy souls, yet not on that account unworthy of our help and our charity! It is not pride that holds them aloof from us, nor the fear of finding a truth which would impose stern sacrifices upon their intelligence and their will. No one can be brought into contact with souls of this kind—and there are many of them among the ranks of the studious—without being convinced of the abounding generosity and love for Truth and Justice which inspire their patient and arduous researches. Believe it, Holy Father, they deserve all our interest. You will say that they are blind and sickly souls. We answer that

they are honest and sincere souls, and that their only fault is the diligent and objective study of certain problems which are fatally imposed upon every serious and balanced thinker in our day, and which present themselves under a quite new and unexpected aspect.

In short, your own call, "Restaurare omnia in Christo," unless it is content with being a rhetorical phrase shorn of all meaning, has forced us, as a matter of duty, to go out to meet these souls who are harassed and troubled by doubt, just as it forces us to meet those others also who, in search of economic progress, left us by the way when they saw that we were the jealous custodians of the privileges of their adversaries.

Christianity of itself transcends every political party as it transcends every current metaphysic whatsoever. In order that it may live it needs to assimilate, through both the one and the other, the civilization that surrounds it. But this

civilization is in a continuous process of transformation. To philosophical systems, other philosophical systems succeed; to the social, political, and economic needs of a particular period other needs succeed. These systems and needs repeat themselves, with alternating authority, in the course of the centuries, provoking that slow, tortuous movement in a generally upward direction which we call progress. In this upward movement Christianity ought to be the centripetal force, spurring on and leading forward humanity in the course of the various stages of its evolution, penetrating with its spirit and moulding with its Divine forms the manifestations peculiar to each of them, yet not wholly identifying itself with any of them. And he who regards as definite forms of Christianity what are only expressions peculiar to the civilization which at a given moment it has made its own, is inevitably co-operating towards its ruin.

Christianity exists in the world as a law of Love and of Truth. It is love and truth that inspire those two factors of modern civilization—science and democracy. That we may make it Christian we have welcomed them, seeking to make them our own, without reserve, without fear, without excessive concern for the past.

But science and democracy, if they are to move forward securely, must submit to the control of criticism which is based, not on the force of authority, but on the value of things objectively established. From this point of view, their acceptance and the task of assimilating them demand of the Church many sacrifices. We know well how the Church, succeeding in Rome to the world-wide dominion which the Emperors abandoned to it, inheriting their authority and fusing it with that of the new races, inaugurated in the Pontificate an authority of its own by which it might reign supreme over all civil powers,

an authority which was still further reinforced by that spiritual dominion its right to which no one disputed. And, further, the Church of the Middle Ages, having completed the fusion of Christian dogma with the Aristotelian philosophy by means of that scholasticism which then included all the knowable, became the arbiter of knowledge and of the minds who knew. This position, even though the events of these late centuries have weakened its force, is still strong enough to render the work of adaptation to the new character of civilization a difficult one for the Church.

The democracy demands of the Church, not only an attitude less conservative and less intent upon favouring the last remnants of the privileged nobility, but also a transformation and purification of forms and persons in her own government, still as tenaciously monarchical and absolute as when she adopted it at the end of the third century and consolidated

it in the Middle Ages. To this end those old coercive methods must be abandoned or relaxed; a certain measure of autonomy in their own provinces must be restored to the Bishops; a more liberal consideration shown towards the religious activity of the laity; sounder tests established in the choice of persons appointed to the supreme direction of her affairs; and in this directing body a wider representation of foreign nations provided for, whereby each may be governed by rules suited to its genius and local requirements.

On the other hand, the demands of science are much more serious. As has already been stated, a change has been wrought in modern intellectual conditions. Our habit of mind is at the opposite pole from that out of which our apologetic was built up. Religion, if it is to be accepted, cannot impose itself by means of a syllogism. It presupposes the *rationabile obsequium* without which it has no moral

value for those who profess it. God, revelation, the Church, dogma, cannot be imposed from without by reasoned arguments. The soul must first seek them through its own free action, must find their reasons and learn their worth under the stimulus of its own religious experience, and bring this experience into relation with the religious experience of the human spirit throughout the ages.

God is not an intellectual abstraction, much less a physical reality offering itself as an object of our sensible experience. He reveals Himself to man by working in the intimate recesses of his personal *ego*, manifesting Himself at first through a confused and inarticulate feeling of infinite, transcendental, incomprehensible Reality. Little by little this feeling, becoming more intense, invites to the act of adoration, till at last the soul feels the urgent need of entering into relations with this invisible Reality, and is led, not only to return upon itself in

an act of reflection in order to investigate the origin and seek for the value of this experience, but also to review the whole history of the past and examine in it the origin and development of the relations of humanity with the supernatural world. To this end the student will not be able to limit himself to the study of the Bible only, as a unique source of the history of religion. For him the Bible is *as yet* a book having the same value as all other books, sacred or profane, which record the history of antiquity. Only after these have been confronted by him with one another, and all alike subjected to the control of critical science; only when the superiority of the religious sentiment, as it germinated and advanced to maturity among a people which had to traverse supreme difficulties and to exist under conditions which were often unfavourable to the rapid growth of a civilization developing in the same way as that of the surrounding nations, has asserted itself in

his mind; only when he is able to establish the fact that the religious experience of Israel corresponds with a more perfect and complete synthesis of the spiritual attitudes and requirements of the ancient world: then, and only then, will he accept the Old Testament.

But he has still something further to accomplish. To us the religion of Israel belongs but indirectly. To-day we are Christians, and our civilization is Christian; but, before we were so, we belonged to the Græco-Roman civilization. And if Christianity is the fulfilment of the religion of Israel, it had, in order to become ours, to make itself Græco-Roman by assimilating Western civilization to itself. Thus, even when the Old Testament has been accepted, there still remains an immense work to be accomplished. It is necessary not only to submit to criticism all the books of the New Testament, but to study their intimate relations, both those which they may

have with the books of the Old Testament and those with Græco-Roman civilization. Thus the student will be able to ascertain what was the original spirit of the Christian revelation, what were its primitive and genuine elements, what were those which it derived from the religion of Israel, and what from the Hellenic civilization. Afterwards he will study the progress and rapid diffusion of the Christian religion by means of the Church, whether and how the Church continued the mission of Christ, whether and how it answers to the spiritual requirements of different peoples, whether and how it co-operates with their advance in civilization.

And if from all these researches he is able to show that the religious sentiment appeared in humanity at first under superstitious and imperfect forms—as all manifestations of physical, intellectual, and moral life were imperfect and primitive — and then, with the slow and

gradual evolution of civilization, instead of being eclipsed and disappearing, rose to higher forms and attained to a reflex knowledge of itself, until it took concrete form in the Christian religion; and if it in turn, considered under the forms of Catholicism, can show that it contains within itself energies which the human spirit will find it useful to assimilate, energies which will help that spirit forward along the path traced by high modern ideals; then alone will the student be able freely to accept the Catholic religion with its authority, its theology, its Sacraments, and its discipline.

For us, this necessity of submitting everything that is the object of our living and profound faith to the control of criticism on the same terms as all the beliefs and expressions of the religious life of various peoples involves an intense, a fatiguing, and even a painful labour. But nothing has prevented us from undertaking it. If we are truly convinced of

our faith, not only ought we to have no fear of science, which, when it is true and certain, is itself also an emanation of the Divine Truth, but we ought also to hope from such control for an ever more living light upon the truths which form the pivot of our religious life.

It is on this account that we have not hesitated to subject to our critical researches the history of other religions together with our own, since they also are revelations of God to the human soul, imperfect, indeed, as compared with ours by reason of the different moral, physical, and geographical conditions of the different peoples, but, in spite of that, revelations also, as St. Paul could justly say. Nor does the application to the Bible of the same laws of historico-philological and literary criticism, which are used for what is called profane literature, mean for us—as you accuse us of meaning—that we make no distinction between its inspiration and the poetical inspiration of Homer

and of Æschylus. As we have continually insisted, not only are such books different for us on grounds of religious value, but also poetical inspiration is, both by its nature and its object, different from religious, even though the latter often emerges simultaneously with the former.

And so in these late years there has been on our part an intense and wide-reaching labour of research, philological, historical, psychological, into all the materials furnished by the memorials of the religious life of humanity. Already the fruits of this research are beginning to appear, and the history of religious experience is revealing itself in modern apologetic in a dazzling light, as clear as it is new. While the essential elements of this experience remain unchanged, new aspects of it, formerly unknown to apologetic, which had examined it only through the lens of the Aristotelian philosophy, have been brought to light.

New light has been thrown first of all on the concept of revelation itself. The scholastic theologians, unprovided with the instrument of historical criticism, considered God, man, the universe, and their mutual relations, from the ontological point of view; and, having an absolute conception of truth and of our knowledge of it, conceived of revelation as a communication of truth directly and by external means from God to man, and as a communication on matters which men could not otherwise have known. This truth uttered by God could not change, must be as immutable as God Himself, and be received without discussion and without variation. Such a conception assuredly does not answer to historico-psychological reality.

The application of criticism to the Old Testament very soon proved to demonstration that the Divine truths, little by little, opened a path for themselves in the spirit of the Israelitish people as it

developed in its general civilization, and that, therefore, the concept of God and the conception of the supernatural and natural worlds varied from age to age, from that of the Patriarchs to that of the Judges, to that of the Prophets, and so on. But it soon came also to be established, from the study of the historical value of the religious books of antiquity, that everything which does not come within the circle of moral and religious truths has a relative historical value only, and does not of itself form part of the object of Biblical teaching; and that all external representations of the self-revealing Divinity do not deserve any recognition as objective and real, since they are merely forms adequate to the effective representation of the Divine in such minds as are thirsting for supernatural manifestations.

This new conception, thus answering to the historico-psychological reality of the development of the human mind, by

distinguishing what in the Bible is religious and moral truth—the special object of its teaching—from what is merely explanation and development of it, avails providentially to save its veracity, its inerrancy, its inspiration. Therefore, even when the accounts, for example, of the Creation, of the Fall, of the Flood, have been shown to be legendary, there remains intact their moral and religious content, which is the revealed truth itself. Yet that does not exclude the truth that the whole of the sacred text of the Bible is integrally inspired—as well revealed truth as what is explanation or presentment of it—though the latter be imperfect and relative to the intelligence of those simple and primitive peoples.

So, while the fundamental conception of revelation remains unchanged—viz., that God Himself reveals Himself to man (since, though it is man that is moved to seek the Good and the True,

it is nevertheless the True and the Good themselves that, unconsciously working in him, move and direct his spirit towards the ever more fully perfect and conscious possession of the Infinite), it has yet come to be established that this revelation is proportioned to the capacity of human nature, and that, therefore, the evolution of faith cannot fail to be co-ordinated with the intellectual and moral evolution of man. For our spiritual faculties (which, to meet the defects of our inadequate and insufficiently comprehensive way of conceiving things, we distinguish from one another) form but the single harmonious unity of our *ego*, so that, when one of them is developed and perfected, the others are developed and perfected also.

This conception, which is no dream of light and fantastic minds, but a clearly established truth for every impartial student of the history of the spiritual activity of humanity, has become the

foundation of our modern apologetic. Scholastic theology set before us the truths of Christianity in the most fully developed external form, consisting in their perfect and systematized fusion with the Aristotelian metaphysic. It presented them in a form which was regarded as irreducible and absolute, and as having been so since the very beginnings of Christianity. But the diligent and accurate study of the same Christianity, based upon the revision of the books of the New Testament, and upon the whole heritage of patristic tradition down to St. Thomas, clearly demonstrates that our theology is but a result of the life of the fundamental dogmas of Christianity as it has been lived by humanity in the different periods of its development. This theology contains the dogmas of the Creation, of the Fall, of Christ's redemptive work, of Grace, as seen in the light of the faith of humanity believing and living in Christ throughout

its own moral and intellectual progress. It is the synthesis of the different phases which faith in the living Christ operating in His Church has successively traversed, from the moment of His death to the Council of Jerusalem; from the time when Paul, after having boldly resisted Peter and overcome the wiles of the false zealots, launched himself upon the conquest of the Hellenic world, to the moment when Christianity had to struggle against and overcome the Gnostic currents, drawing from them a copious wealth of beliefs which it idealized and purified; and so on to the development and the rational and careful systematization which culminated with St. Thomas.

This surely is a providential result, which permits us, following the path that has been traced for us by the Fathers and Doctors, to make this life of faith, of hope, and of love, live again for modern society, which is so ardently aspiring after the Divine; and to induce it to accept in their entirety

the truths of Christianity, by adapting them to its historical and psychological habit of mind, as formerly they were adapted to a metaphysical habit of mind.

All this, Holy Father, does not mean that we are imagining the evolution of dogma in order to return to the pure Gospel, or to a Gospel, let it be, " stripped of the explanations of theology, of the definitions of Councils, of the maxims of asceticism," or that for us " the authority of the Fathers and the Saints is reduced to nothingness."

The evolution of dogma, we have insisted, is an evident historical fact which corresponds with the laws of the evolution of the human mind. No one knows the necessity of dogmas better than we who are devoting all our powers to the perpetuation of their life. As for theology, we affirm that there always has been a theology, and always will be; and, moreover, we also are engaged in making a theology.

Therefore, as a result of our study of history, we are bound to hold that theology is not identical either with scholasticism, or with Christianity, or with dogmas. It can give us the history of their life, since it has been the systematic statement of their interpretation through the faith of the different generations. And so it has varied from age to age, and can and must change in our time also, assimilating its culture, if Christianity still wishes to answer to the spiritual demands of our time. The religious and moral value of fundamental truths remains; only their explanations will change. The object of faith remains the same; its expression, which varies according to the intellectual and moral capacities of men's souls, will change.

In this matter our apologetic attitude in face of modern society is the same which, from the beginnings of the Church down to your Pontificate, has been adopted by the Apostles, the Fathers, the

Doctors, even by you yourself when, as a parish priest, you found yourself in contact with humble and simple souls. When we have, for example, to explain the relations between God the Father, Jesus, and humanity, while we recognize all the beauty of the doctrine built up by scholasticism, and agree in its religious content, we yet cannot have recourse to the ontological terms, "person," "essence," "nature," "hypostases," "processions." As the modern habit of mind does not attach to these any meaning which corresponds with reality, it is returning to exactly the same moral and intellectual conditions as those of the first Christians, or of the humble and simple-minded Christians of our country districts who know nothing of these rational categories, to whom both the first Fathers, and you yourself, perhaps, when you taught the Catechism, explained that God is Father, is Wisdom, is Love: Father of all things by creation; His

wisdom manifested in the order and harmony of the universe, and afterwards revealed in the person and humanity of Jesus, Who died sacrificing Himself for us; and His love manifested in the revelation of the wisdom of God, and still continually manifesting itself in that breath of Divine life which stirs in our spirits as they participate in the society, visible or invisible, of His faithful worshippers.

So, again, to explain the Eucharistic Mystery, we cannot, for similar reasons, adopt the theory of Transubstantiation, unless no one is to understand. But we shall say that the faithful, after the words of consecration, while with the senses of their bodily life they will see only bread and wine, will yet with the soul, by means of a superphenomenal experience—of faith, in short—be in contact with the real and living Christ, Who, before He died, gathered His disciples to a fraternal feast to communicate to them

for the last time the "Bread of Eternal Life"—will be in contact with the Christ suspended upon the cross, the Victim of justice and of peace.

It does not seem to us, Holy Father, that we are thereby annihilating the authority of the Fathers, since our work is but the continuation of theirs, which we are seeking to know more perfectly than it has been known in the past. To recognize, to appreciate, and to imitate the Fathers does not mean to retrace our steps so as to do materially and identically what they did, to repeat word for word what they said. If they had thus acted with regard to the Apostles, and the Apostles with regard to Christ, neither Christianity nor the Church nor theology would now have existed. We accept integrally the whole Christian tradition, and the present-day production of books concerning it shows you how vast the object of our study is. But to imitate the Fathers means to penetrate into their

spirit, to consider their work in relation to their time and to the men with whom they lived, to live in our turn after this spirit, and act according to it in relation to our time and our contemporaries. There is, therefore, no reason to be scandalized if many of our opinions and ideas do not correspond with theirs, formed as they were in a quite different atmosphere; and if we, while still respecting the religious and moral values which they, through their faith, derived from them, cannot accept many of the traditions which, in their ignorance of historical criticism, they accepted and spread abroad. Our adhesion to certain beliefs and traditions fails, at times, for the similar reason that criticism forces us to reject some of the legends which have sprung up in our own days concerning certain saints—as, for instance, St. Expeditus and St. Philumena. Or, again, criticism forces us to refuse adhesion to certain assertions determined by the blind faith of souls,

however holy and illustrious those souls may be. We cannot adhere, for instance, to the assertion of Cardinal Cavallari,* who, when returning thanks to you for the honour conferred upon him, declared that he was called to "occupy the throne of Venice, whereon the Apostle St. Mark was the first to sit"; nor, again, to what you yourself affirmed in the Encyclical of October 27, 1904—viz., that "the Hebrew patriarchs were familiar with the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, and found consolation in the thought of Mary in the solemn moments of their life."

Holiness, you have in the last place accused us also of preaching "a charity without faith, so tender to the unbeliever as to open up the path that leads to eternal ruin for all." Now, apart from the fact that for us there is no charity with-

* Successor of Pius X. in the Patriarchal See of Venice, admitted to the Sacred College at the Secret Consistory of April 15, 1907.—Tr.

out faith, because charity is riches, fruitfulness, fulness of life lived in harmonious communion with the Universal, and that to be such it demands a faith, great, immense, and infinite as God is great, immense, and infinite, we merely reply to you that our tenderness for the unbeliever is not greater than that which we feel for Christ, for the Church, for yourself. The tenderness which in the face of contemporary agnosticism has forced us to bring to it the good news which, without knowing it, it yet loves and desires, is the tenderness which drove Paul to proclaim to the worshippers of the "unknown God" that GOD Whom, though they knew Him not, they yet worshipped—not the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in whose name Peter spoke to the men of Israel, but that GOD, Lord of heaven and earth, whose spirit and life are the spirit and life of the universe; that GOD who is not far from every one of us, "in Ipso enim vivimus

movemur et sumus." St. Paul's tenderness also had to face opposition, and it came from Peter, who in his turn was tender towards the timid scruples of the Pharisees. But the tenderness of Peter availed only to prolong for a little the agony of the Judæo-Christian community. The tenderness of St. Paul for the unbeliever infused into Christianity a force of permanent vitality.

Your programme, Holy Father, "Restaurare omnia in Christo," is a noble one; but reflect that, to give effect to it, pious wishes and holy intentions are not enough, and that the way you have chosen is in direct opposition to it. You have, as it were, shrunk in horror from science and democracy, which we have tried to lead back into the Church's fold; you have shut the gates against them.

You have thought well indeed to restore to Catholics, after more than thirty years of exclusion from public life, the sacred,

natural, and inviolable right to the vote—not, however, that they may use it as free citizens, freely supporting the democracy in its holy aspirations, but only when the candidature of some Conservative happens to be in peril. In the present state of affairs, you have not thought of democracy as the genuine product of Christian brotherhood, as the force of the future. You have recognized in it only that external note which is accidentally hostile to the Church; and, to the loss of the people, of justice, and of Christianity, you have flung yourself into the arms of those who, so long your enemies, but now, for the sake of passing interests, pretending to be your friends, have promised you their support. You do not see that, if they still exist to-day, they will no longer exist to-morrow. You have no doubt ventured to speak of democracy and popular action, but you fail to perceive that, when these are officially ordered and guided by the Church, they

have for all an ill-omened meaning, a suspicious note.

History does not contradict itself. Socialism has its gospel, and that gospel, too, is accepted by upright and balanced consciences. And if, among the struggles and controversies through which it has arisen and has had to defend its existence, it has proceeded to excesses, these cannot be reduced by combating it as you are doing, by opposing to it another and a bastard Socialism. Two forces which are naturally opposed cannot be fused, and the struggle between them will endure until the younger and the stronger has destroyed the other. If you fear Socialism, let Catholics penetrate its organizations and institutions, and import into them the calm spirit of peace and of Christian love.

A bold step for the Church, one which requires an exact and clear perception of the position of modern society ; and that, perhaps, you have not. Nor, we assure

you, are the persons who stand at your side able to enlighten you. A good government in our day draws its force, not from the absolute and obstinate will of him who is at its head, but from his wisdom in selecting honest and intelligent ministers, who may prove faithful interpreters of the needs and requirements of the society they are set to govern. Now, passing by without comment your conduct with regard to the decisions of the General Assembly of French Bishops, and to the individual initiative of some of the most illustrious among them—witness the sad case of Mgr. Le Camus*—what is your criterion

* Mgr. Le Camus, late Bishop of La Rochelle, died suddenly of apoplexy in October, 1906. In the earlier part of that year he had published a pamphlet under the title "Tirer le bien du mal," in which, while adhering to the first Papal condemnation of the Separation Law, he spoke of separation as "un heureux affranchissement, au triple point de vue religieux, matériel, et social." In accordance with these ideas, he proposed to

in the choice of representatives? The recent elevation to the purple of an ex-Nuncio who, amid the anxieties and the sufferings of a people torn by religious strife, was engaged in granting nuptial benedictions at a nice profit—and you knew it, and were grieved by it; the Montagnini case, the incidents of which not yet made public are more numerous than those which are known (the single preoccupation of your counsellors is to keep concealed from you the things which displease you); the promotion bestowed upon a Nuncio whose disgusting avarice was well known to all; the dispatch to the East of a prelate who had been removed on account of his stupidity

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establish an organization of worship in his diocese which, he hoped, would not transgress either the spirit or the letter of the Encyclical of August 10. It appears, however, that this project was rejected at Rome, and the report ran that Mgr. Le Camus died while writing a letter to the Pope in which he sought to justify his action.—TR.

from the office which he held in a Roman Congregation; in short, the whole history of your Pontificate as it concerns the election of Cardinals, Bishops, Legates, Nuncios, Apostolic Visitors in the dioceses, speak with too convincing an eloquence.

With the test of selecting persons who are saints by reason of their piety and wisdom, you do not combine the test of selecting persons who by study, culture, and experience of practical life have a clear and steady insight into the questions which are troubling the modern age. No, the single criterion, when there is not added to it that of convention and customary etiquette, is either age or antimodernism. You do not reflect that grey hairs and sanctity of life are of no avail in a ruler when, owing to the education he has received in times which are no longer ours, or to methods and habits of living far remote from the life of our time, experience is not added to them.

You do not consider that antimodernism may be the patent of ignorance and self-interest. Every one in these days is dinning into your ears accusations of modernism, of that *bête noire* which no one knows, of that horrible spectre which every one believes he has recognized, but which no one can define otherwise than as "the heresy which contains all the heresies and errors of the past"; and you blindly listen to their pious indignation, and will not see that most frequently these defenders of faith and morals are slaves of incontinence, of insincerity, of sloth, of ignorance. Yet against them not even the authority of Bishops of proved holiness and learning is of any avail.

It is the voice of the young only that you will not hear, of those younger men whom you so fiercely abuse, both in public and in private, in Allocutions and Encyclicals, whom you accuse and inexorably condemn, but of whom you have so little direct knowledge. Yet we have

seen your glorious predecessor, the austere old man already past his ninetieth year, so inflamed with wrath when the Dean of the Sacred College,* in its presence and the presence of the diplomatic corps assembled to congratulate him on his birthday, spoke offensively of the young Christian democrats of Italy, that he had not the force to answer on the spot the fierce accusations of the wearer of the purple: but the next day he made known to the public through the press that in the young men lay the future of the Church, that their work, in order that it might succeed to her profit, ought not to be opposed, but rather encouraged by authority with words of counsel and of consolation.

You have turned your back upon your predecessor and paralysed the acts and the institutions which rendered his Pon-

* Luigi Oreglia di Santo Stefano, Cardinal Bishop of Ostia, and still Dean of the Sacred College.—TR.

tificate glorious. You have preferred the men of the syllogism to the men of profound and positive knowledge as though the salvation of the Church lay, not in the objective establishment of historical truth, as your predecessor desired it should, but in maintaining intact traditions which are devoid of meaning and foundation; you have regarded as a blasphemer the man who was able to demonstrate the insufficiency of the proofs of the miraculous translation of the Holy House of Loretto—as if the worship paid to the Blessed Virgin were founded upon its historical reality. And as if in fear that the religious and moral value of the Bible and its inspiration should fall along with the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch, you introduced into the Biblical Commission—the first gathering of Catholic scholars in the teaching Church of our day—a flock of theologians who might bleat in chorus the litanies of those arguments which support all traditional theses,

*beyond dispute, beyond revision.** Nor have you perceived how great were the hopes of those noble and generous souls who had devoted their lives to the reunion of the Protestant Church with the Catholic, and whose wings you have now clipped. Yet two years have not passed since you welcomed them with open arms, consoled them with your blessing, and promised them your co-operation.

The method which is adopted by the Vatican to repress and suffocate every manifestation of life and individual activity has thus concurred to increase the confusion of those who, with the faith and eagerness of Apostles, were co-operating in the Christian restoration of society. Censure, espionage, calumny, low and vulgar slander, have become the legitimate and ordinary means of persecuting every person of initiative. Every book which is the expression of new apologetic attempts, and is, in addition,

* *Indiscutibili, incontrollabili.*

the outcome of a profound and laborious acquisition of all the well-established results of the positive sciences, is condemned, even within a few weeks of its publication, after examination by people who are entire strangers to historical research. Let the Loisy case be our witness. Reviews established with the sole design of treating religious questions objectively, of welcoming the judgments of persons who are not Catholics, but men of assured scientific knowledge, and of thus proving that religion is not the enemy of science, are regarded as anti-religious; and already there is talk of their condemnation. It is said that the publication of a Syllabus,* destined to arrest the modern scientific-religious movement, is imminent. And to think, Holy Father, that you still groan under

* While these sheets are going through the press, the long-expected syllabus of theological errors has appeared, comprising sixty-five condemned propositions.—Tr.

all the weight of the Syllabus of Pius IX., which, in accord with your moderate-clerical political ideas, you must wish had never existed! Yet there has not been wanting an illustrious person, now deceased, one whose sanctity and learning you admired, Mgr. Scalabrini,* to forewarn you, when reproaching you for the condemnation of Loisy, that twenty years would not have passed before his ideas had become the ideas of all honest and intelligent persons.

But you are the inexorable judge, not only of new ideas, but of the persons who hold them. Without any respect for that share of freedom which God has granted to every conscience; without regard to the holiness of life with which these persons are clothed; forgetful, it would seem, that

* Monsignor Giovanni Battista Scalabrini, born near Como in 1839, died June 1, 1905. He was Bishop of Piacenza, for almost thirty years, and was given the Medal for Civil Worth (*al valore civile*), on account of his devotion during the cholera epidemic of 1869.—Tr.

it is faith which inspires works with life and that Christian works are not wrought save as the product of faith, you use suspension *a divinis* as a means of violating the rights of conscience, more inexorable in this than our civil tribunals, which take away civil rights only in exceptional cases, and after giving an opportunity to the accused to prove his innocence. And to think that this abuse of spiritual penalties was combated in the Church in the early Middle Ages, and that, not by a modernist, but by St. Peter Damian, who upbraided Nicholas II., not only for being in this respect more rigorous than civil tribunals, but for overstepping the limits of God's justice and mercy!

Meanwhile Father Tyrrell is suspended *a divinis* for having accomplished a work of real Christian apostolate. They have even gone so far as to demand of him the violation of secrecy and of personal confidences. Murri is suspended, only for having expressed himself too sincerely

about men and things of which you disapprove; and it has been charged to his account that, because he is opposed to your policy of alliance with the Moderates, he has been called an anticlerical—though only in the sense in which those Moderate-clericals, who, though pastors of souls and good Catholics, found themselves opposed to the intransigent policy of Leo XIII., were called anticlericals.

It is to-day regarded as a crime to utter a word of disapproval about either the proceedings of ecclesiastical government or the dishonourable conduct of those who represent it. But meanwhile, here in Rome and outside it, reviews and journals which breathe all the fiery and headlong zeal of Islam are permitted to bestow upon us the most shameful titles and to accuse us of disgusting infamies, in spite of the clerical robe which many of us wear, and far from unworthily. Truly, a "charity of the kind recommended by St. John"!

It is inspired by their sentiments and imitating their language that you, Holy Father, have called us rebels—a terrible charge, yet not such as to prevent us from feeling all the injustice with which we are treated, or from appreciating the gravity of the present hour.

Holy Father, your friends tell you that we are "opening up the path of eternal ruin for all," and we tell you that the enemies of the Church are rejoicing in the hostility with which you are opposing our work. We tell you that no longer ago than April 22 last an authoritative journal of Milan declared that, though it was certain that our ideas would triumph in a not distant future, yet before they triumphed the Socialists would have completely turned to their advantage the persecution which is dogging the footsteps of our young men. We would remind you, too, of these words which a French Freemason recently uttered to a friend. "Our whole hope,"

he said, "is in the Pontiff; we believe that after the Separation he will desire to expel the Liberal Catholics from the Church, and the Liberal Catholics are our fiercest opponents."

We know well that our word will have no weight with you; and to-morrow, we are certain, espionage, censure, calumny, will be renewed against us with redoubled vigour. Everything will be done to make us apostates. But we will stand firm at our post, prepared to endure everything, to sacrifice everything except the truth. Our voice, reverent indeed, but frank, unambiguous, sincere, will be ready to expose every action of yours which is not inspired by wisdom and equity.

We mean to be, not rebels, but sincere Catholics, to the salvation of Christianity. Our rebellion will be, at the most, the violence which a loving son ought to exercise towards a sick mother, that he may induce her to observe the orders of

the doctor which are indispensable to her recovery.

We have desired to say this to you at the solemn moment in which, to our confusion and distress, you have willed to strike at our dearest friend. Amid the bitterness which it has inflicted upon our hearts we send to him a greeting and an augury. May Don Romolo Murri drink the bitter cup of his suffering, not as a beaten foe who rebels against the conqueror, but as a free man, clear-sighted, generous, and assured that his sacrifice is being made for the high Christian ideals of Justice and Truth!

From our hearts we implore you to show wisdom, sincerity, equity, clemency!

APPENDIX

DISCOURSE OF PIUS X. ON THE OCCASION OF CONFERRING THE CARDINAL'S HAT ON THOSE RECENTLY PROMOTED TO THE PURPLE, APRIL 17, 1907

DISCOURSE OF PIUS X.

WE welcome with the liveliest satisfaction the sentiments of devotion and of filial love towards ourselves and this Apostolic See which you, in your own name and the name of your most beloved brethren, have manifested, to the honour of the purple to which you have been called. But in accepting your words of gratitude we must insist on saying that the illustrious virtues with which you are adorned, the zealous works which you have accomplished, and the other signal services which in different fields you have rendered to the Church, have made you entirely worthy of being included in the roll of our Sacred Senate. And it rejoices us to have, not only the hope, but the certainty, that, now that you are clad with new dignities, you will, as in the past, consecrate your genius and your force to the assistance of the Roman Pontiff in the government of the Church. If the Roman Pontiffs

have always had need of external aid for the accomplishment of their mission, this need is to-day making itself more vividly felt owing to the very serious conditions of the time in which we are living, and of the continual assaults to which the Church is exposed on the part of her enemies.

And here do not suppose, Venerable Brethren, that we wish to allude to events in France, painful as they are, since they are largely compensated for by very precious consolations —by the admirable union of that venerable episcopate, by the generous disinterestedness of the clergy and the pious firmness of Catholics ready to face every sacrifice for the defence of the Faith and the glory of their fatherland. Once more it is proved that persecutions but put in evidence and mark out for the admiration of all the virtues of the persecuted. At the most they are like the waves of the sea, which, dashing themselves against the rocks in the tempest, purify them, if it is necessary, of the mud which has defiled them. You know, Venerable Brethren, how for this reason the Church felt no fear when the edicts of the Cæsars bade the first Christians either abandon the worship of Jesus Christ or die, being assured

that the blood of the martyrs was a harvest of new proselytes to the faith. No, the war which really afflicts her, the war which makes her cry "Ecce in pace amaritudo mea amarissima," is that which springs from intellectual aberrations in virtue of which her doctrines are despised, and there rings through the world that cry of revolt for which the rebel hosts were driven from heaven.

And rebels, indeed, they are, those who profess and spread abroad under artful forms monstrous errors on the evolution of dogma; on the return to the Gospel—the Gospel, that is to say, stripped, as they put it, of the explanations of theology, of the definitions of Councils, of the maxims of asceticism; on the emancipation of the Church, but conceived after a new fashion—an emancipation which will enable them not to revolt, so that they may not be cut off, and yet not to submit, so that they need not abandon their own convictions; and, finally, on adaptation to the times in everything—in speech, in writing, even in the preaching of a charity without faith which, while extremely tender to the unbeliever, is opening up the path to eternal ruin for all.

You see clearly, Venerable Brethren, whether

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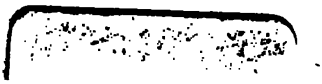
we, who must defend with all our force the deposit which has been entrusted to us, have not reason to be in anguish in presence of this attack, which is not a heresy, but the compendium and poisonous essence of all heresies, which aims at undermining the foundations of the Faith and annihilating Christianity. Yes, at annihilating Christianity, for the Holy Scripture is no longer for these critics the trustworthy source of all the truths which pertain to the Faith, but a common book. For them inspiration is confined to its dogmatic teachings, and those understood after their fashion; is, indeed, but slightly distinguished from the poetical inspiration of Æschylus and of Homer. The Church is the legitimate interpreter of the Bible, but only if she submits her interpretation to the rules of so-called critical science, which imposes itself upon theology and makes it its slave. As for tradition, finally, everything is relative and subject to change, and so the authority of the holy Fathers is reduced to nothing. All these and a thousand other heresies they publish in pamphlets, in reviews, in ascetic treatises, even in novels, and they wrap them up in certain ambiguous terms, in certain

nebulous forms, so that when put on their defence they may always keep open a way of escape without incurring open condemnation, and thus catch the unwary in their nets.

We count, however, much on your aid, Venerable Brethren, so that whensoever you, with the Bishops your suffragans in your provinces, learn of these sowers of tares, you may unite with us in combating them, inform us of the peril to which souls are exposed, denounce their books to the Sacred Roman Congregations, and meanwhile, using the powers which have been granted to you by the Sacred Canons, may solemnly condemn them, persuaded of the very serious obligation you have assumed to aid the Pope in the government of the Church, to combat error and defend the truth even to the shedding of blood.

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